

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please replace the paragraph on page 10, lines 11-18 with the following amended paragraph:

C 1  
That is, each transmitter diagnostic signal 225 and receiver diagnostic signal 235 indicates a number of bit errors which were produced by that portion of the single continuous communication path in the WDM optical communication system from the first optical transmitter, Tx<sub>1</sub>, of the first optical communication network element 110 up to and including the output of the corresponding optical transmitter ~~220~~120 or optical receiver ~~230~~130, respectively. Each of the transmitter diagnostic output signals 225 and receiver diagnostic output signals 235 are provided to a diagnostic analyzer 250, which may include a computer processor.